

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR (Georgian SSR)

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE DISTR 18 Feb. 1952

SUBJECT Tbilisi/Sartichala Airfield

NO. OF PAGES 1

PLACE  
25X1 ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW) 1

25X1 DATE OF  
INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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1. The military airfield is located about 4 km southeast of Sartichala (41°43' N/45°11' E), Georgian S.S.R., just south of a river. A hard surface road about 8 meters wide connected the field with Sartichala, and an unpaved road led to Tiflis (Tbilisi) (41°42' N/44°45' E). The field, about 1.5x2.5 km, had no concrete runway, taxiway or boundary lights.
2. Buildings at the field included two three-story barracks buildings, each 12x30 meters; a machinshop, 3x12x25 meters, where Diesel engines were repaired; an administration building 4x3x30 meters; and two hangars, including a U-shaped 10x50x30-meter repair hangar in which there were also class rooms, and an 18x30x50-meter hangar, called Anflughalle (test hangar), which was occupied by aircraft.
3. About 30 to 40 twin-engine bombers were parked on the northeastern edge of the field. Description: low-wing monoplane with two in-line engines, full view cockpit, one plexiglass turret on top of and one under the fuselage, landing gear retracting rearward with a half turn of the wheels, rigid tail wheel. Take-offs, landings, formation flying with about 12 to 15 planes, and parachute jumps were practiced daily.
4. Some of the officers resided in Sartichala, and some in small wooden houses in the vicinity of the field. The commander of the field was an air force general who lived in Sartichala. Most of the student pilots were about 18 to 20 years of age.
5. Air force soldiers said that the field was to be improved and used for training purposes. Jet planes were expected to arrive by the end of 1947.

Attachment: Sketch of Tbilisi/Sartichala airfield.

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Class. Changed To: TS S 0

Auth: HK 70-2

12 JUL 1972